

SENIOR SPARKS

MANSFIELD SENIOR CENTER NEWSLETTER

~ SPECIAL EDITION APRIL 2020 ~

In lieu of our usual program-filled newsletter, we are putting out this Special Edition Senior Sparks this month. Inside you will find helpful resources that will be useful at home while our building is closed to the public. Content will include ways to keep yourself busy at home, how to stay healthy and protect yourself against COVID-19, and resources within the community. We miss you all very much and look forward to seeing you again. Take care, stay well, and we will talk to you soon! ~*Mansfield Senior Center Staff*

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

The Windham Regional Transit District (WRTD) continues to provide transportation service to Ashford, Chaplin, Columbia, Coventry, Lebanon, Mansfield, Scotland, Willington and Windham through both Dial-A-Ride services and fixed route buses. In addition, WRTD provides connections to transit services in Danielson, Mansfield and Norwich. If you need local transportation, please contact Dial-A-Ride at 860-456-1462 to schedule a ride. Mobile Foodshare transportation and shopping runs have been suspended until further notice. Senior Center transportation is still being offered for essential medical appointments. Ride requests are evaluated on a case by case basis. The Senior Center reserves the right to refuse transportation to anyone experiencing or living with someone experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.

SENIOR CENTER STAFF

Although our building is closed to the public, Senior Center staff are working daily – safely on site and remotely - to ensure that Seniors in our community have food, essential transportation and important information. We are also actively checking in with those who live alone, those without transportation, and those for whom we know this time will be difficult and stressful; we're checking in with all of our participants through email and Facebook with important information on how to stay well, local resources & services, and ideas & suggestions of things to do at home - virtual field trips, online fitness classes, recipes to try, craft ideas and more. We will continue to post updates to the Senior Center webpage and our Facebook page – please help us get this information out to as many people as possible by sharing our posts with your neighbors, friends and family! If you'd like to be added to our weekly email list, please email Skye at budneys@mansfieldct.org. And if you or someone you know needs any assistance at all, please contact us at 860-429-0262 or the Human Services office at 860-429-3315.

Mansfield Senior Center
303 Maple Road, Mansfield, CT 06268
Tel: 860-429-0262 Website: www.mansfieldct.gov/seniors

FOOD & NUTRITION

Meals on Wheels deliveries continue to go out to homebound clients, aged 60 and over. To register for Meals on Wheels, please contact TVCCA at 860-934-1006 if you are interested in enrolling in the service. Safeguards have been put in place to avoid contact with the meal recipients at this time.

Community Café Meals are available for those who typically eat their lunch at the Senior Center and do not have transportation. On Tuesdays, 5 frozen meals are delivered to recipients' homes in a no-contact drop-off. Contact TVCCA at 860-934-1006 if you have questions or would like to sign up.

Food Pantry is maintained by The Human Services Department has food and personal care items to help those in need. If you are experiencing an emergency food need, please contact the Human Services Department at 860-429-3315 for assistance.

Mobile Foodshare will still be distributing food in the Senior Center parking lot. Staff and volunteers will be following a Grab-n-Go process for the distribution. At arrival, each Mobile guest can receive a number from the Human Services front office. Please stay at your vehicle and away from other people as you wait for your number to be called to receive your food. You do not need to sign up for this service. Distribution begins at 11:30am on 4/9 & 4/23. All are welcome! Please call 860-429-3315 if you have questions.

STAYING CALM AND REDUCING FEAR DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

During times of significant change and uncertainty, it is natural to experience different and intense emotions. Coping with these feelings and getting help when you need it is important to your overall wellness. Taking care of yourself and your loved ones can help you cope with the stress of social distancing. Things you can do to support yourself include:

- **Take breaks** from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media, that may be upsetting
- **Take care of your body.** Take deep breaths, stretch, meditate, eat well-balanced meals, exercise, get plenty of sleep, and go outside for sunshine and fresh air if possible
- **Make time to unwind.** Try to do some other activities you enjoy
- **Connect with others and seek help** when needed. . Talk with people you trust, like a clergy member, counselor, or healthcare provider, about your concerns and how you are feeling. If you need to talk to someone for support, you can call Warm Lines telephone support system at 1-888-770-4478 daily from 9am to 5pm
- **If you or someone you care about are feeling overwhelmed** with emotions like sadness, depression, or anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or others, call 911 or the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990

Senior Center staff are calling to check in with folks during this difficult time.

**If you would like to receive regular check-in calls,
call 860-429-0262 to be added to our list.**

HOW TO AVOID COVID-19 SCAMS ACCORDING TO THE FTC

- Hang up on robocalls. Don't press any numbers. Scammers are using illegal robocalls to pitch everything from scam Coronavirus treatments to work-at-home schemes. The recording might say that pressing a number will let you speak to a live operator or remove you from their call list, but it might lead to more robocalls, instead.
- Ignore online offers for vaccinations and home test kits. Scammers are trying to get you to buy products that aren't proven to treat or prevent the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) — online or in stores. At this time, there also are no FDA-authorized home test kits for the Coronavirus. Visit the FDA to learn more.
- Fact-check information. Scammers, and sometimes well-meaning people, share information that hasn't been verified. Before you pass on any messages, contact trusted sources. Visit What the U.S. Government is Doing for links to federal, state and local government agencies.
- Know who you're buying from. Online sellers may claim to have in-demand products, like cleaning, household, and health and medical supplies when, in fact, they don't.
- Don't respond to texts and emails about checks from the government. The details are still being worked out. Anyone who tells you they can get you the money now is a scammer.
- Don't click on links from sources you don't know. They could download viruses onto your computer or device.
- Watch for emails claiming to be from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or experts saying they have information about the virus. For the most up-to-date information about the Coronavirus, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO).
- Do your homework when it comes to donations, whether through charities or crowdfunding sites. Don't let anyone rush you into making a donation. If someone wants donations in cash, by gift card, or by wiring money, don't do it.



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

AARP Tax Aide Appointments have been suspended and we do not have any appointments scheduled at this time. Federal and State filing and payment deadlines have been extended until July 15, 2020. At this time, we suggest you seek tax assistance elsewhere to ensure you file on time. You can prepare your taxes for free at www.myfreetaxes.com

AARP Safe Driving Courses that are in-person have been cancelled through May 31st. If you would like to take the AARP Smart Driver online course, there is a special 25% discount using code DRIVINGSKILLS to keep the price the same as the classroom price. Visit www.aarpdriversafety.org for more information and to take the class.

April is Volunteer Appreciation Month! Though we are unable to host our usual volunteer appreciation event at this time, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the many volunteers that help make the Mansfield Senior Center the wonderful place it is! To our receptionists, kitchen and café helpers, Meals on Wheels and Medical Transportation drivers, group leaders, and everyone who has volunteered their time or resources in the past year, THANK YOU!

E.O. Smith Pen Pals! Looking for something to do during social distancing? Students at E.O. Smith are looking to connect with you. If you are interested in being a pen pal to one of these students, contact Mary Flood at floodmh@mansfieldct.org. Hopefully in the not too distant future we can bring you all together to meet your pen pals face to face!

New Online Programming! In lieu of in-person programming, we are proud to offer online options to keep us connected while social distancing! By using Zoom our staff and instructors will be facilitating fitness and social programs that you can access at home. Programs are free of charge and will begin the week of April 13th.

- * **Mondays:** Yoga with Tami at 10:30am—Experience the many health benefits of this gentle restorative practice. All you need is a blanket and some pillows!
 - * **Wednesdays:** Strength & Stability with Margie at 10:30am—This cardio and toning class is designed to work your body at whatever level you're comfortable. You will need water bottles for weights, a round pillow for a ball, a towel for a band, and a hard kitchen chair.
 - * **Wednesdays:** Virtual Social Hour at 1:00pm—Join Senior Center Staff for a chatty social hour!
 - * **Fridays:** Strength & Stability with Margie at 10:30am—This cardio and toning class is designed to work your body at whatever level you're comfortable. You will need water bottles for weights, a round pillow for a ball, a towel for a band, and a hard kitchen chair.
- If you are interested in joining our online programming, please contact floodmh@mansfieldct.org for information on how to access the virtual meetings.

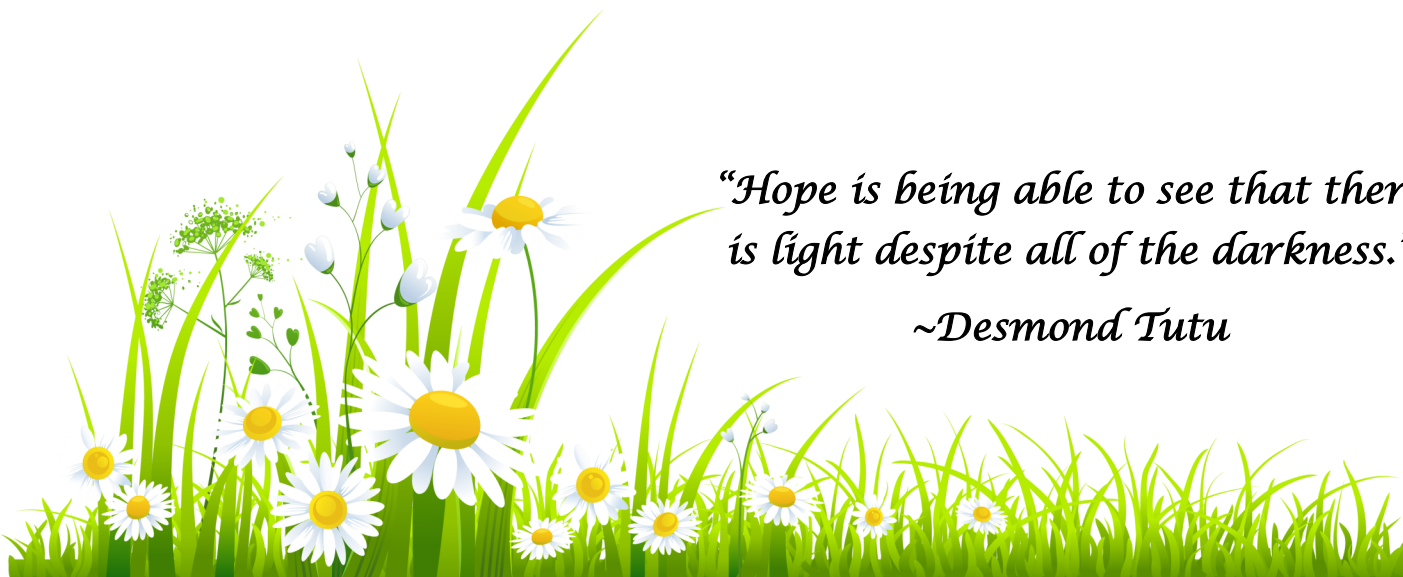
UR COMMUNITY CARES (UCC) is a secure online resource that connects volunteers with community members ages 70 and older and are in need of assistance with household errands and other tasks. Services include (but are not limited to) shopping and drop-off of food and other essentials including medical supplies, pet walking, taking out the trash, yard clean-up and anything else that provides peace of mind in difficult times. UCC is up-to-date and compliant with the CDC's COVID-19 protocols. It's free for residents or groups to enroll online, complete a background check, and then schedule assistance for household tasks/errands, yard work and companionship visits (currently via remote/distant contact). For more information, visit www.URCommunityCares.org, call 860-430-4557 or email info@urcommunitycares.org.

THINGS YOU CAN DO AT HOME

- Write a memoir, poem, or short story
- Send a card or letter to a loved one
- Give your brain a workout with a crossword puzzle, word search, or Sudoku puzzle. Look at the end of this newsletter for some activities
- Do some spring cleaning. Go through your clothes and see what you might like to donate
- Meditate— sit in a comfortable chair, close your eyes, and focus on your breathing. Use this time to clear your mind and relax
- Watch a movie or TV show
- Organize your photos, labeling them with names and dates and add them to photo albums
- Go outside—if the weather is nice, take a walk, garden, sit on the porch. Be sure to stay a safe distance away from anyone else who is outside
- Finish projects at home, whether cleaning, building, fixing, mending, or starting something you keep putting off, this is a great time to tackle some of those projects
- Read a good book
- Redecorate your space
- Stretch or find another way to keep your body moving
- Call a friend or video chat with Skype or FaceTime to see their face
- Turn on some music and sing along
- Gaze at the stars
- Make a list of everything you would like to do when this is all over and life returns back to normal
- Practice a language—brush up on one you already know or learn a new one using the Duo Lingo app or another language-learning website

“Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.”

~Desmond Tutu



VIRTUAL TOURS & ONLINE ENTERTAINMENT

- Broadway shows to stream
 - ◊ <https://www.pbs.org/show/great-performances/collections/broadway-pbs/>
 - ◊ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqCsQCsinK4&list=PLQPYg_6MPH5g7paPCeo9mzqcBJgGk5h1N&index=14
- Museums/Art Collections
 - ◊ The Louvre—<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yixv9J6Agdo>
 - ◊ The British Museum—<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u04g-pHLPnM>
 - ◊ The Metropolitan Museum of Art—<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHrmoSlfLD0>
 - ◊ Smithsonian Museum of Natural History—<https://naturalhistory2.si.edu/vt3/NMNH/>
- Zoos and Aquariums
 - ◊ San Diego Zoo Live Cameras—<https://zoo.sandiegozoo.org/live-cams>
 - ◊ Mystic Aquarium—<https://www.mysticaquarium.org/penguin-live-stream/>
 - ◊ Georgia Aquarium—<https://www.georgiaaquarium.org/webcam/beluga-whale-webcam/>
- Lifelong learning
 - ◊ TED Talks—www.ted.com
 - ◊ Documentaries—www.documentaryheaven.com
 - ◊ Free classes for Harvard & Yale—www.classcentral.com/collection/ivy-league-moocs



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Town of Mansfield—mansfieldct.gov

Eastern Highlands Health District—ehhd.org

Center for Disease Control—www.cdc.gov

Medicare—www.medicare.gov

State of Connecticut—portal.ct.gov

CT Hospital Association—cthosp.org/covid-19-update-center

Social Security Administration—www.ssa.gov

211 CT—www.211ct.org

Senior Resources Agency on Aging—seniorresourcesec.org



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Activities

S D R I B U E R F A

BIRDS

L Q I I C A E F L Y

BUMBLEBEE

W X H Z O H B L O I

FLOWERS

O W O W T E E D W W

GARDEN

R M N A A R L X E O

GROW

HONEY

G O E L B R B G R B

RAINBOW

S W Y M D E M W S N

SUNSHINE

P O U Y V B U T D I

UMBRELLA

G A R D E N B F H A

WARMTH

WEATHER

D S U N S H I N E R

E L F E Y O Y C Q E

BAKE

J X Y T T Z X X J S

BOARDGAMES

X M E I S I N G H H

COOK

B O A R D G A M E S

EXERCISE

C P T W C R J T P B

GARDEN

V O I N D I I U U A

PAINT

M O O E I K S D Z K

PUZZLE

K B N K N A A E Z E

QUILT

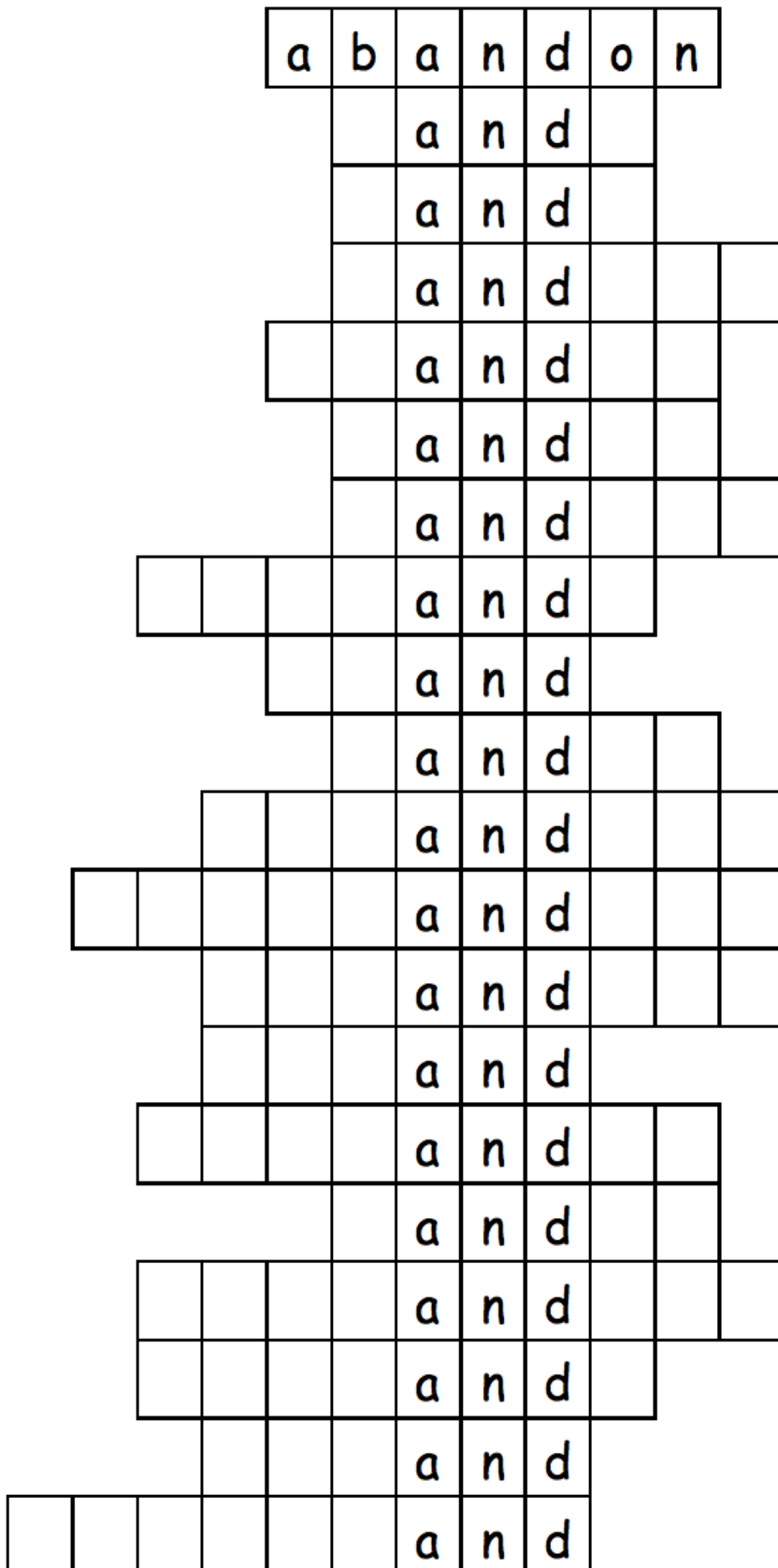
T L I U Q E P M L L

READ

SING

Activities

Each of the words below contains the letter combination "AND". Use the clues to find each word.



To give up or discontinue.

A Chinese bear.

A sweet treat

This covers a wound.

Your mother's mother.

A robber or outlaw.

A purse.

Eroded, unlivable places.

Boring or lacking taste.

Wax with a wick that makes light.

Sieves used in cooking.

Fantastic!

Getting bigger.

A short trip used to do something.

A military person in charge.

Truthful and straightforward.

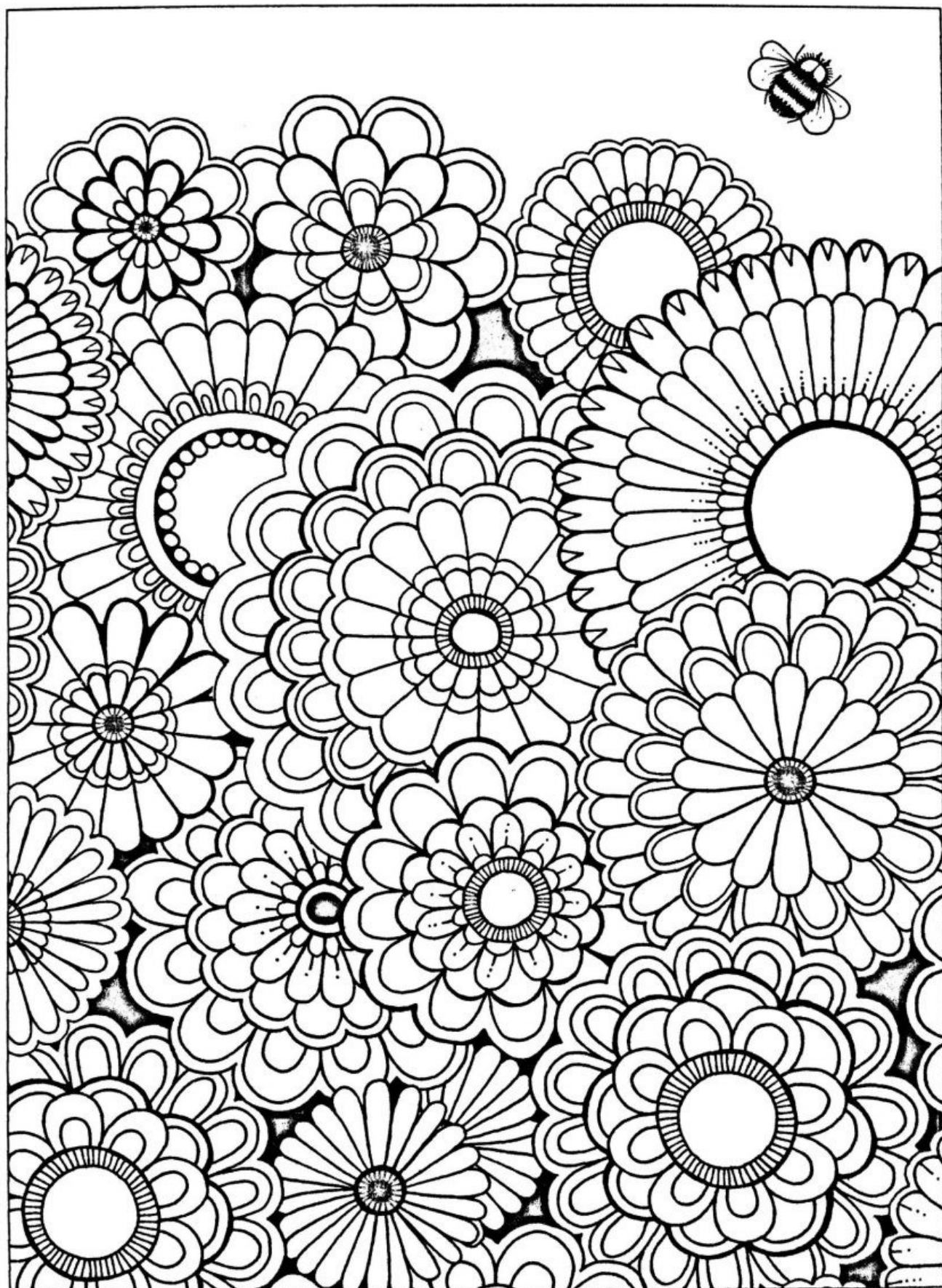
People watching an incident.

Married to wives.

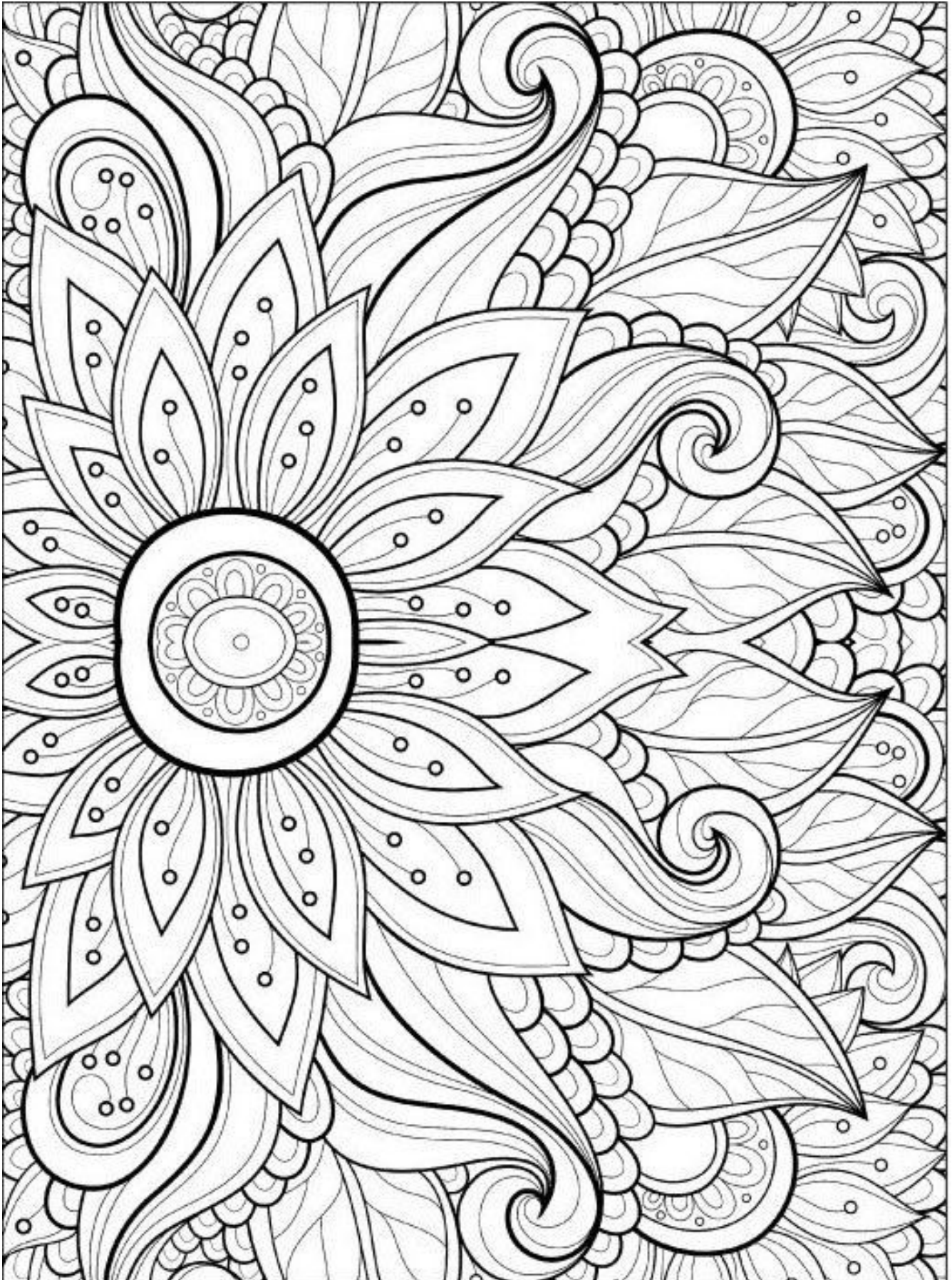
Land surrounded by water.

This holds up a bicycle.

Activities



Activities



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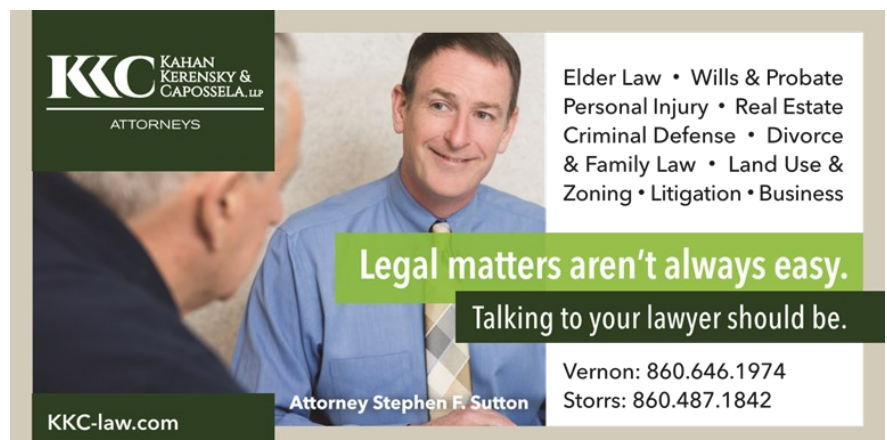


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For more information, please contact the Human Services office at 860-429-3315.

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303 Maple Road
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